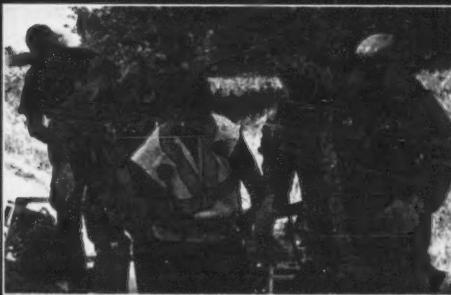


# OFFICE *of the* FIRE COMMISSIONER

Office Of The Fire Commissioner  
Bureau Du Commissaire Aux Incendies



## ANNUAL REPORT



Manitoba



## Mission Statement

To safeguard both persons and property from fire and life safety hazards through education, investigations, emergency response and code application.

## Our Values

**We believe** people have the right to live in safe communities.

**We believe** in providing the best possible programs and services to our clients.

**We believe** being responsible for our organization and in our organization being fair, effective and efficient.

**We believe** in the loyalty of our people and value their continued development.



---

**Minister of Labour and Immigration**

Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA  
R3C 0V8

His Honour, The Honourable Philip S. Lee, C.M., O.M.  
Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba  
Room 235, Legislative Building  
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8



Your Honour:

I have the privilege of presenting the fourteenth Annual Report of the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Jennifer Howard  
Minister of Labour and Immigration





**Labour and Immigration**

Deputy Minister of Labour and Immigration  
311 Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA  
R3C 0V8  
T 204-945-4039 F 204-945-2203  
[www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca)

**Honourable Jennifer Howard**  
**Minister of Labour and Immigration**  
**Room 317 Legislative Building**  
**Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8**



Dear Minister:

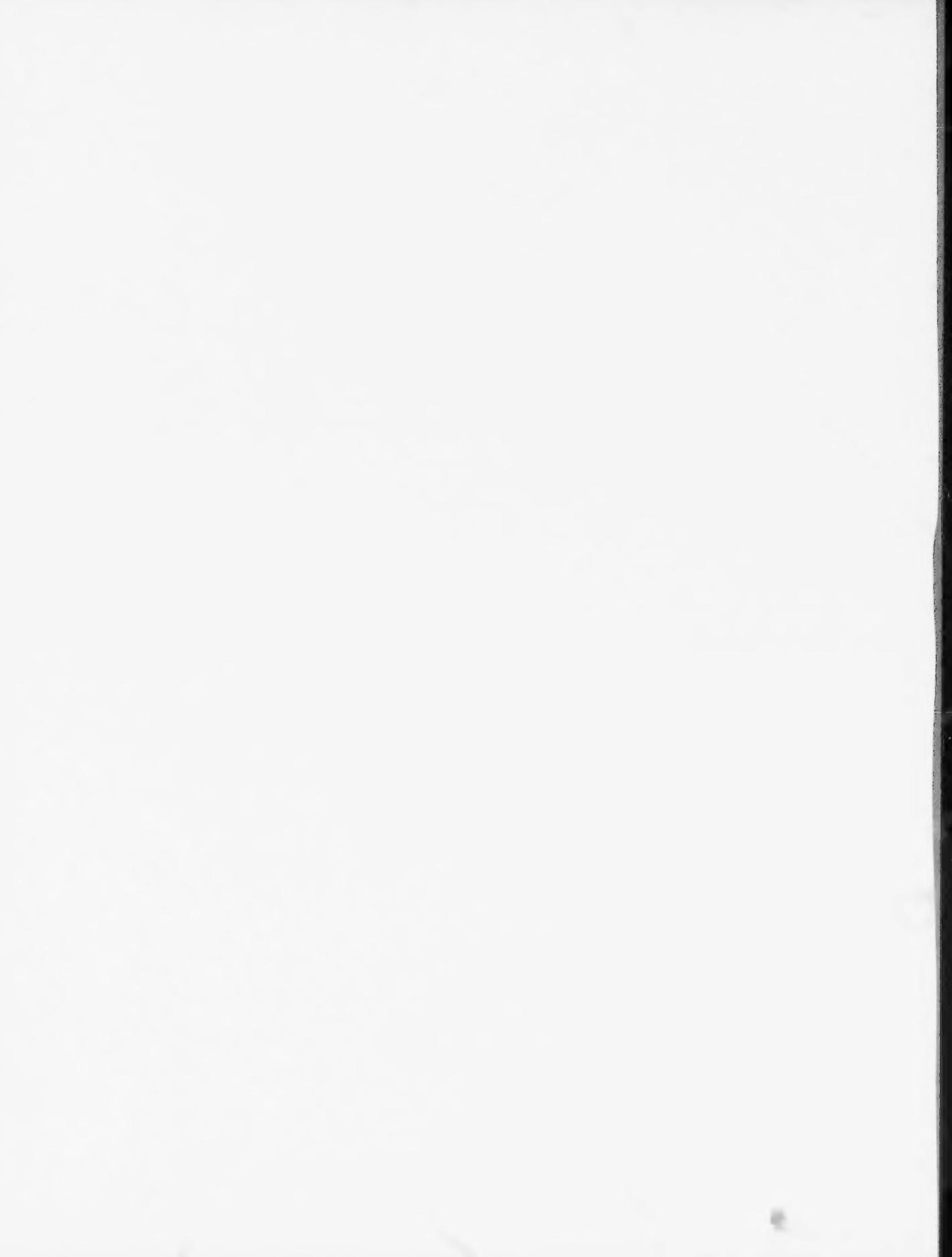
I am pleased to submit, for your consideration, the fourteenth Annual Report of the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the year ended March 31, 2010.

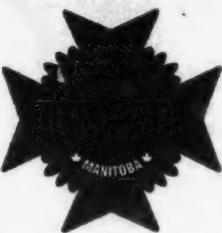
The Board and Management continue to strive to meet the important organizational mission of safeguarding both persons and property through education, investigations, emergency response and code application.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

**Jeff Parr**  
Deputy Minister and Chairperson of  
the OFC SOA Advisory Board





**Jeff Parr**  
Deputy Minister of Labour and Immigration  
Room 311 Legislative Building  
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

Dear Chairperson:

I am pleased to submit for your review the 2009/10 Annual Report of the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the year ended March 31, 2010.

**Highlights of the year:**

- The Agency applied for and received federal and provincial grants to cover costs associated with hazardous materials and heavy urban search and rescue initiatives;
- In partnership with Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, the Office of the Fire Commissioner is in its fifth year of a fire protection strategy to enhance fire protection services in northern and remote communities;
- The Agency finalized a significant expansion of the Brandon training, response, and office facility;
- The Manitoba Emergency Services College (MESC) received re-accreditation of 28 programs through the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC);
- Through MESC over 4000 individuals were certified in emergency management and response;
- Fire investigators investigated over 650 fires in 2009/10
- The Agency participated in 22 emergency responses.

Through our continued commitment to enhance the level of public safety in the Province of Manitoba, the Office of the Fire Commissioner will continue to be a leader in the emergency services community.

Yours truly,

**Original signed by**

**Christopher L. Jones**  
Fire Commissioner

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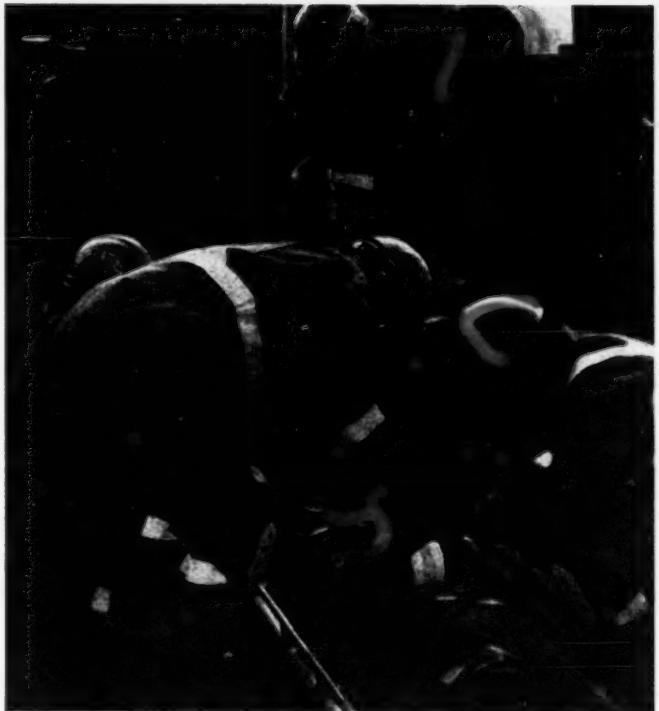
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# SPECIAL OPERATING AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD

*The role of the Advisory Board is to provide advice on the Agency's strategic operations and on changes to its mandate, structure, business practices and finances. The Advisory Board reviews and comments on all Agency's proposed business plans, quarterly and annual reports.*



**The Advisory Board consists of the following individuals:**

**JEFF PARR**

*Board Chair*

*Ex Officio*

Deputy Minister

Manitoba Labour and Immigration

**DOUGLAS POPOWICH/CHRIS JONES**

*Ex Officio*

Fire Commissioner

Office of the Fire Commissioner

### **Members**

**KEVIN BRISCOE**

*Client Representative*

ING Insurance

**RALPH GROENING**

Association of Manitoba Municipalities

*Councillor, RM of Morris*

**AL NEATH**

*Client Representative*

**DICK HARVEY**

Agency Staff Representative

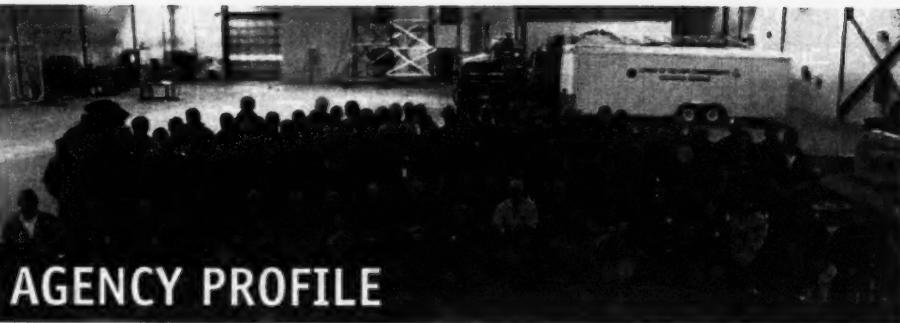
Office of the Fire Commissioner

**DANNY THORSTEINSON**

*Client Representative*

Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs

# 1



## AGENCY PROFILE

Manitoba Urban Search and Rescue Team CAN TF-4

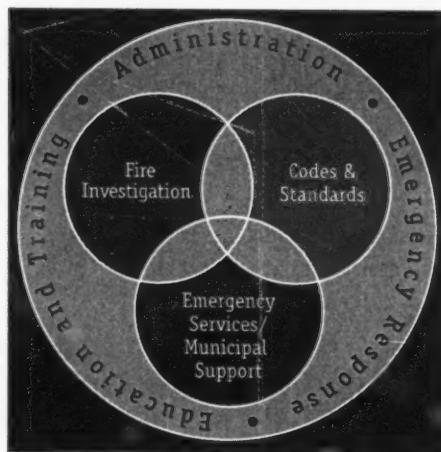
### Historical Perspective

*The Fires Prevention Act* originally created in 1872 for the prevention of prairie fires, included the authority to conduct fire investigations. In 1876 the first Fire Commissioner was appointed to administer and enforce this Act. In 1885 the Act was amended to include fire protection of wooded lands. In 1940, the Act was separated into two parts. Part I dealt with forest fires and Part II outlined the responsibilities of the Fire Commissioner in the area of fire prevention. In the early 1960's, training of fire fighters was included in this Act. Part I of the Act was replaced with the new *Wildfires Act* in 1997.

As a result of the tragic events on September 11, 2001, Bill 2, *The Security Management (Various Acts Amended) Act* received Royal Assent. This Act mandated the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) to respond to all emergency situations to ensure that a sufficient incident management system is in place and operational. It provides the Fire Commissioner with the authority to take whatever action necessary to save lives and property. As a result, *The Fires Prevention Act* was changed to *The Fires Prevention and Emergency Prevention Act (FPERA)*. This Act was recently amended (November 1, 2006) to further update

and enhance the authorities of the Fire Commissioner and local authorities.

In addition to the responsibilities of the FPERA, the Agency is responsible to ensure administration of *The Building and Mobile Homes Act*. This responsibility was first introduced in 1877 through *The Manitoba Public Buildings Safe Egress Act* and was followed by *The Manitoba Public Building Act* in 1884. The focus of both these Acts was the assurance of safe public assembly buildings and means of egress. The proliferation of building codes and standards resulted in the introduction of *The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act* in 1974, which came into effect on April 1, 1977.



## ***Organizational Services***

*The services provided are allocated into the following six sections:*

### **Administration**

Through the Fire Commissioner, the Administration Section provides overall leadership and direction to the organization. All planning for fiscal, operational, human resource management and policy development is the responsibility of this section.

### **Municipal Support**

Provides consultative services and support to the municipal fire service in the areas of fire department management and operations, fire prevention inspections, public education and fire investigations, as well as provides support to the province-wide mutual aid system.



### **Education and Training**

Provides comprehensive emergency services training, public education, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and emergency medical training through the Manitoba Emergency Services College (MESC) or local community-based trainers.



### **Codes and Standards**

Provides building plan review, code enforcement, consultative services, verifies permit applications and provides advice in the development of the *Manitoba Building, Fire and Plumbing Codes*.



### **Fire Investigations**

Determines the cause and origin of all fires referred to the Agency.

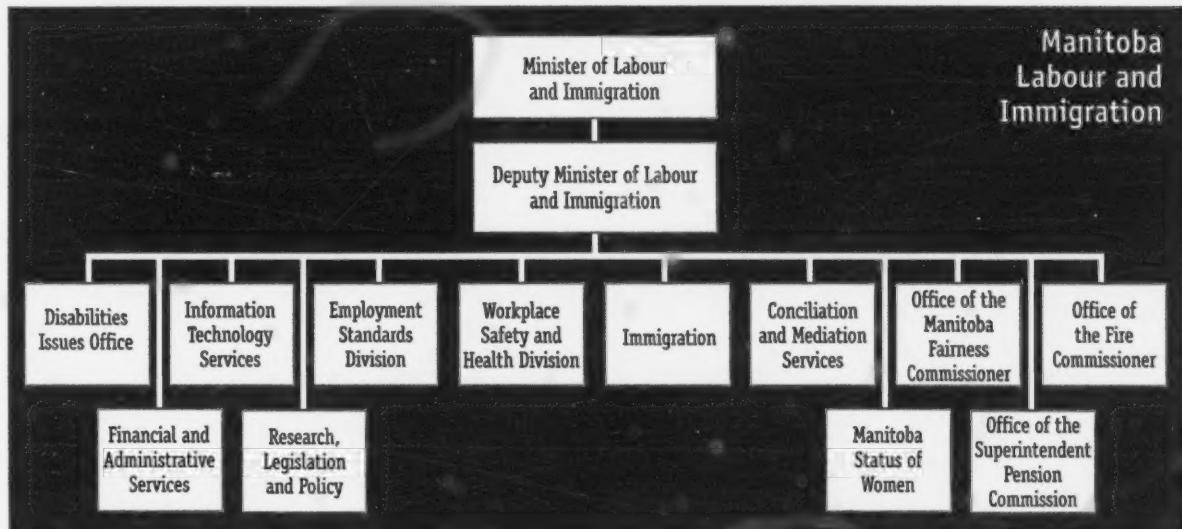
### **Emergency Response**

Provides emergency response services to the Province of Manitoba to assist with the operation and mitigation of major emergency incidents that are larger than municipal capabilities, too technical in nature for municipal resources or of a provincial nature.

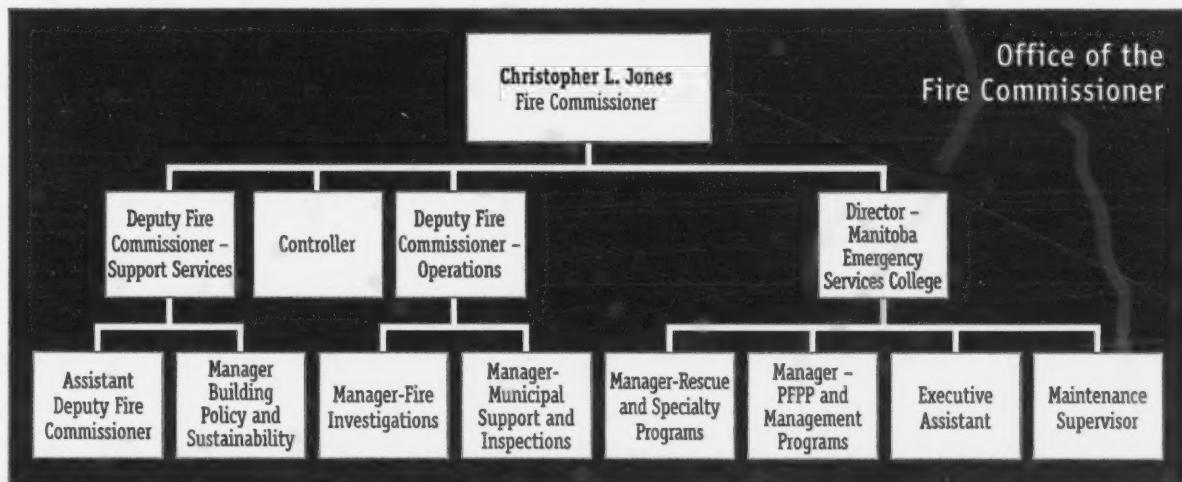


## *Organizational Structure*

The OFC is an Agency within Manitoba Labour and Immigration and reports directly to the Deputy Minister of Labour and Immigration as illustrated in the following organizational structure.



The following organizational structure has been defined for the Agency.



During the 2009/10 year the agency has increased its staff complement to 72. The Fire Commissioner reports to the Deputy Minister of Labour and Immigration and acts as the Agency's Chief Executive Officer. The Fire Commissioner provides overall supervision and guidance to the Agency with the assistance of three Deputy Fire Commissioners. The senior management team provides the day to day management of the organization and consists of managers from each section. The Agency has offices in Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson, and Dauphin.

# 2

## PROVINCIAL FIRE STATISTICS

Students at 2009 MESC Conference

During 2009, Manitoba reported 5,468 fires. The number of fires increased by 77 or 1 per cent over 5,391 reported in 2008. Property damage has decreased by \$13,696,059 or 8.7 per cent over last year's figures. There were twenty one fatalities, a decrease of 1 from the 22 reported in the previous year. Injuries stand at 291, an increase of 60 injuries, from the 231 reported last year.

Fires in Manitoba resulted in an estimated \$143.7 million in property damages during 2009. Forty-two major loss fires (damages of \$500,000 and over) accounted for \$57.7 million (40 per cent) of the total estimated property loss in 2009. During 2008 Manitoba recorded 45 major losses with damages of \$79.1 million.

During 2009, 21 people (19 adults) perished as a result of 17 fires in the province. Twelve of these incidences were home fires which resulted in 15 fatalities.

While the cost of fires in terms of injury, death and property loss is high, it must be compared to the costs saved in lives and property as a result of the efforts of the Manitoba Fire Service. During 2009, an estimated \$4.0 billion in property was saved as a result of the containment and suppression of fires. In addition, the Manitoba Fire Service reported assisting in the evacuation of approximately 1,991 individuals from fires.

### The Number of Fires In Manitoba:

*Number of Fires per 100,000 population*

	2009	2008	2007	2006
Manitoba	421	450	469	483

### The Cost of Fires to Manitoba:

*Property Loss per capita*

	2009	2008	2007	2006
Manitoba	110.52	131.25	95.42	92.61

*Injury Rate per 100,000 population*

	2009	2008	2007	2006
Manitoba	22.38	19.27	23.13	29.97

*Death Rate per 100,000 population*

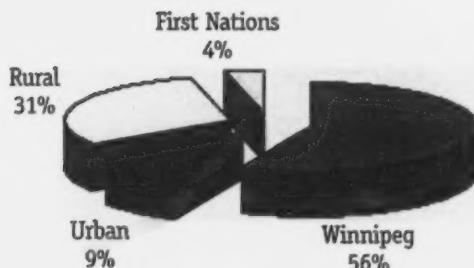
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Manitoba	1.62	1.83	2.21	1.35

### The Location of Fires in Manitoba

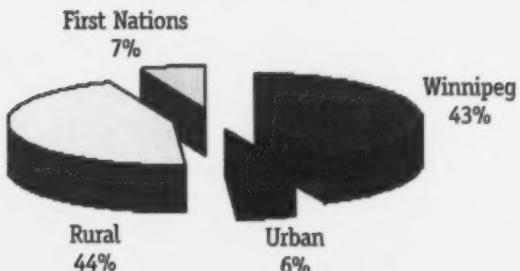
*Distribution of Fires*

	2009	2008	2007	2006
Winnipeg	3,105	3,204	3,450	3,867
Remainder of Province	2,363	2,187	2,487	2,168

### 2009 Manitoba Fires



### 2009 Manitoba Property Damage



The City of Winnipeg accounts for 56 per cent of reported fires and 43 per cent of property damages in Manitoba. During 2009, 2,289 or 74 per cent of Winnipeg's fires involved outdoor property, primarily rubbish and grass fires. Of these outdoor property fires, 476 or 21 per cent were intentionally set or of a suspicious nature.

Rural Manitoba reported 44 per cent of the fires and accounted for 57 per cent of property damages.

During 2009 there were 5,468 fires which caused \$143,675,279 in damages. Outlined below are the per centages of fires and damages by four major causes: accidental, arson, suspicious and undetermined.

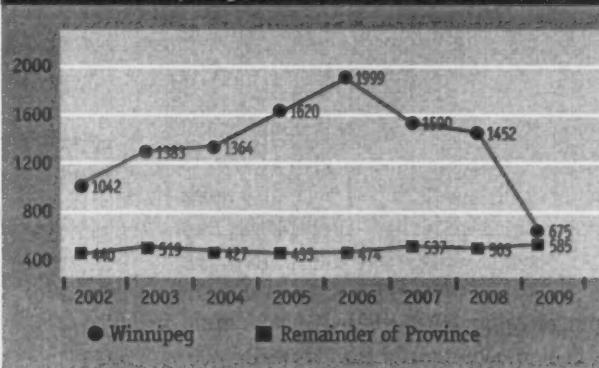
During 2009 the City of Winnipeg reported 675 incidents which were determined to be incendiary or suspicious in nature; this depicts a decrease of 54 per cent or 777 fires below the 1,452 incidents in 2008. The remainder of the fires determined as arson suspicious increased to 585 for an increase of 16 per cent or 82 over the 503 reported in 2008.

The Arson Strike Force and Youth Fire Stop Program remain dedicated to reducing the losses in both the City of Winnipeg and the remainder of the Province.

### Causes of Fires

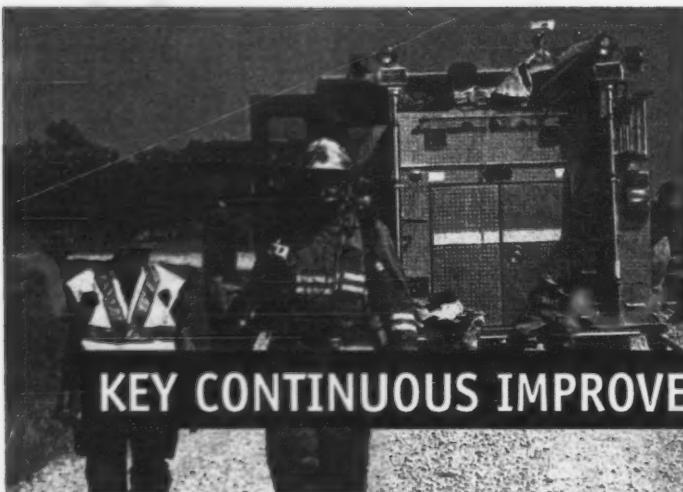
	Fires	Property Damage
Accidental	37%	57%
Arson	13%	14%
Suspicious	10%	3%
Undetermined	40%	26%

### Manitoba Arson/Suspicious Fires 2002-2009



PFPP Students in training

# 3



## KEY CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

2009 Hazmat training at Ebb & Flow MB

The Agency has identified several goals for the 2009/10 business plan year. These goals form the organization's action plan for each section. The following information provides an overview of the current status of each section's goals and objectives.

### 3.1

#### ADMINISTRATION

*To continue to work on the regulations necessary to support the FPERA and The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act.*

The FPERA was proclaimed on November 1, 2006. In development of this legislation extensive consultation with the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs (MAFC), the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) and other key stakeholders was undertaken and significant improvements have been implemented. Roles of local assistants, municipalities and municipal officials under the legislation have been expanded and there has been clarity provided surrounding the role of the OFC in fire and other emergencies and disasters. The amendments further clarify the role of municipalities in public safety in the province and improve the powers of local officials in dealing with fire and life-safety risks in their jurisdiction through several measures including the adoption of the Manitoba Fire Code and enforcement of inspections.

Another very important piece of legislation that falls under the responsibility of the OFC is *The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act*. This legislation outlines the requirements of the Manitoba Building and Plumbing Codes and provides the direction for municipalities on the enforcement of codes and standards related to building construction. Municipalities receive their designation to perform building permit reviews and the Agency is responsible to ensure that the local municipality is following those rules.

Throughout the 2009/10 fiscal year, the OFC has continued to work with stakeholders to develop regulations under the FPERA respecting certification of emergency personnel, incident management requirements and fees and charges. Regulations under *The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act* respecting designation of municipalities, recreational vehicle compliance and qualifications of building officials will continue to be developed during the 2010/11 business year.

### ***3.1.2 To continue the expansion of the OFC's Brandon facility.***

The Manitoba Fire College was established in 1975 by the OFC to assist the Manitoba Municipal Fire Service with training and education. At that time the Manitoba Fire College was offering courses at the Agricultural Extension Centre in Brandon. In 1985 the Manitoba Fire College was built and seven OFC staff moved from the provincial building into the new Manitoba Fire College. In 1986 the Fire College offered the first full-time pre-employment program in Canada. This first program graduated 11 students. The Fire College also issued 620 certifications to municipal fire departments. In 1994, the province expanded the Fire College by adding on seven classrooms, a state of the art theatre, a boardroom and student lunch room to the existing facility. The Fire College was also given a new name, the Manitoba Emergency Services College (MESC). The MESC now graduates 64 full-time Public Fire Paramedic Program (PFPP) students and issues over 4000 other certifications a year. In 1997, the province again expanded the MESC and built the Practical Training Site. This site is used by the MESC, fire departments from across Manitoba and industry. The facility is now home to the 37 full-time OFC staff headquartered in Brandon. As well, the MESC provides support to more than 100 casual staff (instructors) and is utilized by several organizations in the province.

With the increased growth shown in the past years, the OFC was facing several challenges with respect to housing of staff, classroom availability and emergency response equipment storage. Currently the OFC is renting an ATCO trailer to house eight of the full-time staff as the office space is not large enough to handle the staff in the facility. The OFC has developed a client base that includes all municipalities' emergency response services, Regional Health Authorities (RHA), as well as industry and policing agencies.

To continue the growth is paramount to the success of the OFC and a long-term investment in both storage facilities and office space has assured that the OFC will continue the ability to expand the programs and services offered through the facility in Brandon.

During the third quarter, construction of the third and final phase began. Completion of all structural components was completed at the end of 2009/10 year, with finishing work to be completed in the first quarter of 2010/11.

### ***3.1.3 To explore the development of a "net zero" office building in Winnipeg***

Having received an increase of \$350.0 to \$2,862.0 for the Capital Continuity Schedule in 2009/10, the Agency is continuing to explore the development of this building. Consultations for feasible land and structures have continued during the 2009/10 year.

The Agency has consulted with multiple commercial real estate brokers and are exploring all options ranging from extensive renovation of the current Winnipeg facility to the development of a new office facility

### ***3.1.4 To increase the current staff complement from 71 to 72 personnel as directed; as well as hiring a new Fire Commissioner in a succession role.***

In the third quarter, Christopher Jones was declared the successful candidate and appointed as Fire Commissioner.

The staffing complement has been brought to 72 personnel through the conversion of a term position to a full-time position within the MESC.

### ***3.1.5 To review and amend fines associated with Fire Code and Building Code violations.***

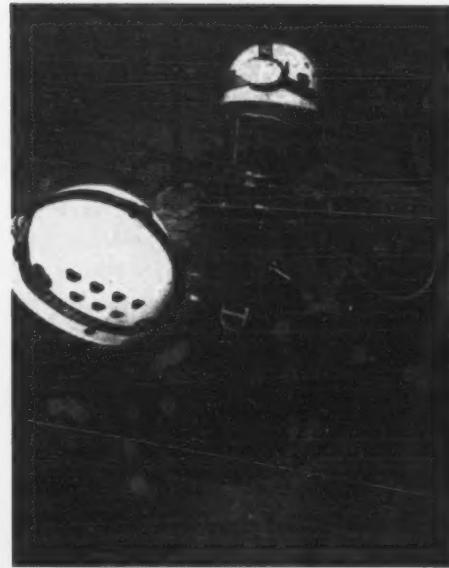
The Agency has worked with both Legislative Council and the Department of Justice during the 2009/10 year to ensure that fines imposed under the Acts remain appropriate with other jurisdictions in Canada. A regulation will be developed in the 2010/11 year detailing a fine schedule for these violations.

### ***3.1.6 To continue to consult with the SOA Co-ordinator prior to implementing changes to the Operating Charter.***

A complete review of the organization's operating charter took place in the 2008/09 business year. The Agency has continued working with the SOA Co-ordinator to ensure the charter reflects the future direction of the OFC.

During the 2009/10 year, the Agency has taken a proactive approach by including the SOA board on developmental decisions within the OFC. This direction has allowed for a more effective decision making model on issues affecting stakeholders of the Agency.

### ***3.1.7 To continue to monitor and develop the Agency's short and long-term capital plan.***



2009 Confined space training at MESC

In previous business plans, the Agency identified a capital replacement figure based on generally accepted accounting principles reflective of the Agency's amortization rates. As the Agency continues to provide more services and acquire more equipment, the need to develop a longer-term plan was identified. With respect to this need, the Agency developed a detailed three-year plan.

The OFC has proceeded with the identified capital purchases for the 2009/10 business year and will continue to do so in 2010/11.

## **3.2**

### **MUNICIPAL SUPPORT**

#### ***3.2.1 To continue to assist municipalities with Fire Code enforcement of all high hazard and public assembly occupancies as mandated in the FPRA.***

Although municipalities are required to provide fire protection services, they are allowed to decide how and what services they provide. Providing fire inspections is an effective method of providing fire protection but is a service not provided by a large number of municipalities across the province.

Legislation has been passed that requires all municipalities to adopt the Manitoba Fire Code and a regulation passed on June 1, 2007 outlines the buildings required to be inspected.

The OFC has developed this regulation with key stakeholders from the MAFC and AMM. The Agency will continue to support any municipality asking for assistance in performing inspections when requested and has begun to provide more training programs related to fire inspections throughout the year. The agency continued this assistance for the 2009/10 year.

### ***3.2.2 To continue to implement and deliver a Fire Smart Program in co-operation with Manitoba Conservation.***

During the third quarter of the 2009/10 year, the Agency continued the development of the Fire Smart Program in co-operation with Manitoba Conservation. Educational material has been developed for distribution to high hazard areas and consultation with local authorities in these regions will continue for the remainder of the 2009/10 year.

To continue to work directly with municipal councils in an effort to educate elected officials of their responsibilities regarding the provision of fire protection and emergency response services.

The Agency recognizes the importance of assisting municipal councils in understanding their responsibilities for the provision of fire protection and emergency services. With approximately 50 per cent of municipal officials changing every four years, as a result of municipal elections, the Agency has noted a need to continually educate councils on the issues and responsibilities associated with operating a fire protection force.

The Agency will continue to host presentations for municipal officials relating directly to their responsibilities in providing effective fire protection services and report in the overall performance measures. As well, the Agency will continue to work closely with the AMM in an effort to ensure a consistent message is provided to all municipalities.

Throughout the 2009/10 year the Agency has developed a Fire Protection Survey which, upon completion, provides options to councils regarding fire protection and prevention in their jurisdiction. Several municipalities have requested this service and feedback has been positive throughout the year.



2009 Flood Breezy Point

## **3.3**

### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### ***3.3.1 To prepare for the re-accreditation of the Manitoba Emergency Services College.***

Results of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) site visit were presented during the second quarter of the 2009/10 year. All 28 programs put forth by the Agency were granted accreditation.

The numbers of accredited programs run though the MESC is one of the highest in North America.

Preparations will continue during the 2010/11 year to ensure that the programs offered by the MESC reach the highest standard of quality.

***3.3.2 To continue to enhance, develop and support training and education opportunities in the more remote locations of the province.***

The remoteness of some areas within the province has a negative impact on the ability for people to travel to facilities such as the MESC. The Agency will continue to assist and support remote communities through partnerships such as the joint Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) program and utilization of the Thompson facility and will continue to build upon education and support services in the areas of fire protection, emergency response, hazardous materials response and incident command in order to better serve the region.

During the 2009/10 business year, training opportunities were provided by college instructors in remote communities as well as offering training centralized in both Winnipeg and Brandon. This combination of opportunities maximizes training for emergency services personnel located in the north.

***3.3.3 To increase the current Public Fire Paramedic Programs (PFPP) tuition from \$15.0 to \$17.0.***

The increase from \$15.0 to \$17.0 was completed in the first quarter of the 2009/10 year and allows for the PFPP program to operate efficiently while remaining one of the most affordable professional programs in Canada.

***3.3.4 To continue to build upon the Agency's partnership with Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service.***

The Agency is currently evaluating the viability of expanding the partnership with Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) and will be reporting throughout the 2010/11 year on any additional programs being offered.

***3.3.5 To continue to ensure that education and training programs meet the diversity of our clients.***

The agency continues to promote a marketing plan that was developed to assist with the recruitment of Aboriginal people to the PFPP. To assist in this task, the Agency sought the services of an intern of the Aboriginal Management Development Program. Partnership agreements and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were established between the Agency, the Manitoba Assembly of Chiefs and the Manitoba Métis Federation. The Agency put in place a half-time liaison officer to deal specifically with Aboriginal issues.

The Agency has been working towards establishing links for cultural and diversity training and will be monitoring the increase in Aboriginal participants in the PFPP to ensure that all partnership objectives are maintained.



2009 Hazmat training

# 3.4

## CODES AND STANDARDS

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### ***3.4.1 To continue to explore the development of energy and water efficiency/conservation codes or objectives in the Manitoba Building and Plumbing Codes.***

One of the emerging areas of code consideration is the development of minimum objectives related to energy and water efficiency/conservation. The Agency has recently been involved in several meetings with members from Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines, the National Building Energy Code Collaborative and members from various energy/water efficiency advocates.

In addition, the Province of Manitoba has implemented a Green Building Policy for buildings which are being constructed with provincial funds. Currently the administration and enforcement of the Manitoba Green Building Policy falls under the responsibility of this section.

The Agency established committees that provided key recommendations on the next steps to moving towards energy efficiencies through code development and application. Amendments to the Building Code will require a higher standard of energy efficiency for residential home construction. The new requirements will apply to construction of new homes and major renovations of existing homes. Areas of home construction that will be affected include attic insulation, windows, ventilation systems and fireplaces.

### ***3.4.2 To develop the training and education programs necessary to continue to support codes and standards officials in the province.***

*The Building and Mobile Homes Act* provides that municipalities have a responsibility to enforce Part 9 of the Manitoba Building Code as well as Part 3 where delegated. To assist in ensuring that building officials are appropriately trained and educated in code enforcement, the Agency will be working with the Manitoba Building Standards Board (BSB) to identify any training gaps.

Currently through the MESC, the Agency provides training and education programs for codes officials however these programs are based on an Ontario model. As the Agency moves forward on this review, consideration will be given to developing and establishing a Manitoba-made model of training.

Through a complete review of training requirements and programs in cooperation with the BSB, the Agency will be developing programs for both Part 9 and Part 3 building officials. These programs will assist in ensuring that when a municipality is delegated code enforcement responsibilities, it will meet acceptable training standards. This program development will continue in 2010/11.

To develop a regulation outlining the requirements necessary for both Part 9 and Part 3 building code enforcement delegations.

The issue surrounding delegation of authority for administering Part 9 and Part 3 of the Manitoba Building Code has been unclear and not well documented in *The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act*.

Although delegation of authority under Part 9 is automatically granted under the current Act, the process to evaluate the appropriateness of this delegation is not

considered. In addition, municipalities that would like to embark on delegation for Part 3 do not have a clear guideline to follow.

The BSB has established a subcommittee that began work on the requirements during the third quarter. This subcommittee is being led by the AMM representative of the Board.

The regulation was developed outlining the requirements of municipalities to achieve this designation and assist in ensuring delegations are granted where appropriate. To date three municipalities have expressed interest in undertaking this designation.

## 3.5

### FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

#### *3.5.1 To continue to develop and support Arson Strike Force (ASF) models within the province.*

The ASF unit was established to assist with community threats relative to arson activities. With the introduction of this model, the Agency has noted a sizeable decrease in the City of Winnipeg with respect to arson-related and suspicious fires. The success of this model, coupled with the fact that over the last five years suspicious fires throughout rural Manitoba have increased, lead the Agency to develop similar models for rural Manitoba.

The OFC provides investigation services to the province through an integrated, accessible and dedicated network of fire investigators. The Agency has developed partnerships with the RCMP and fire services in both the City of Brandon and the City of Thompson and developed an integrated response team similar to that of the Winnipeg ASF.

The Agency provides fire investigation services as part of the OFC mandate. The ASF model requires additional commitments of existing staff, which can only be achieved through reduction of services in other areas. There is also additional overtime costs associated with these call outs. The Agency will continue to monitor staff time and commitment and ensure that it maintains service while being fiscally responsible.



OFC Investigators on scene

To continue to build upon a joint arson strategy with the RCMP that will address the increasing rates of arson in both urban and rural locations in Manitoba.

As discussed, there has been a noted increase in suspicious and arson-related fires in rural Manitoba. The Agency has met with the RCMP to discuss a long-term strategy to deal with arson issues. This resulted in a joint agreement that will allow the Agency to respond to areas with the RCMP major crimes unit that are problematic.

The OFC and the RCMP realize that quick response, community involvement and on-scene investigation of high arson areas are paramount to the success of this joint strategy. Both organizations have provided staff resources and time when faced with an area that has high arson activity. During the 2009/10 year this strategic working relationship has been utilized several times with positive results. Due to increasing arson rates in rural Manitoba, continued implementation and development of this strategy is anticipated.

# **3.6**

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

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### ***3.6.1 To continue to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters in the province too large, technical or complex to be handled by the local municipal or mutual aid system.***

Recent legislative changes in the FPERA have mandated the Agency to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters. As such, the Agency provides a critical link in Manitoba's safety infrastructure, through support of the municipal emergency response system. This Section provides emergency response to all areas in the province when:

- requested by a municipality or government agency
- an incident is too large/complex for the responding agency to handle
- an effective Incident Command model is not demonstrated
- a lost person GSAR is required
- where the responding Agency does not have the capabilities to handle any hazardous materials incident or CBRN event
- any USAR is required
- any emergency is deemed to be provincial in nature

As the Agency is mandated to provide emergency response in the province, the ability to remain a leader in the emergency services field is important. Through several initiatives, the OFC has become the leader in Manitoba for the proficient response to incidents involving hazardous materials, wildland urban interface fires, GSAR, USAR and incident command/management of major provincial/municipal emergencies.

The Agency has responded to 22 emergency incidents during the 2009/10 business year.

### ***3.6.2 To continue to develop and maintain the capability of USAR within Manitoba.***

The Province of Manitoba, through Treasury Board, directed the OFC to develop a USAR capability for the province. This project was a federally funded initiative with the province committing 25 per cent of the funding and the federal government committing 75 per cent.

USAR is defined as: "the location of trapped persons in collapsed structures using dogs and sophisticated search equipment; heavy equipment such as cranes to remove debris; the work to breach, shore, remove and lift structural components; the treatment and removal of victims; and the securing of partially or completely collapsed structures".

The Agency has developed and equipped this highly specialized team of over 100 individuals from the OFC, RCMP, Manitoba Hydro, municipal fire services, RHA and Winnipeg Police K-9 Unit and has been noted as only one of five teams in Canada that is federally sponsored and recognized.

The Agency has continued to build on the expertise and skills of this very valuable team through team training and meetings in the first quarter and a major provincial exercise took place in the fourth quarter.

### ***3.6.3 To continue to support, develop and ensure sufficient resources are available to respond as part of the provincial Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) and the provincial hazardous materials response team.***

Over the past year, the Agency has been active in the delivery of CBRN basic level training

to the emergency response departments of Manitoba in an effort to ensure that initial responders have the knowledge and ability to recognize a possible CBRN incident.

The Agency will continue to maintain the provincial capabilities through monitoring of all responses to hazardous materials incidents by emergency services departments across Manitoba, educating and recertifying all team members and will ensure that all incidents are managed safely and effectively through the implementation of a proper Incident Command System.

***3.6.4 To continue to train and educate government departments and municipal authorities in Incident Command as directed by the Deputy Minister's Committee on Emergency Management.***

Throughout the 2009/10 business year, and consistent with the direction received by the Deputy Minister's Committee on Emergency Management, the OFC continued to train and educate all government departments in Incident Command through on-line education programs, programs offered through the MESC and courses specifically requested by departments.

In the third quarter, the Agency provided Incident Command training to the Executive Management of Manitoba Labour and Immigration. This provides a sound knowledge base for the operation of the departmental Business Continuity Program.

***3.6.5 To ensure timely information is provided to the media and public during times of emergency.***

Due to recent large emergency response events, the Agency was directed to undertake a review with Communication Services Manitoba (CSM) on the manner in which immediate updates are provided to both

the media and general public. As a result of the concerns expressed, the Agency met with CSM and developed a process in which immediate release of information/updates by OFC staff will be undertaken.

During large scale events the Agency will ensure that media notifications will be done in a timely manner and consistent with the agreement between CSM and the OFC. During the fourth quarter the Agency provided training and education from CSM to further enhance the ability of officers to deal with the media on scenes of large scale emergencies.

***3.6.6 To continue to support, develop and enhance the provincial GSAR team.***

The responsibility for GSAR in Manitoba rests with the police agency having jurisdiction. Through a MOU between the Agency and the RCMP, and as directed by the Province's Emergency Plan, the Agency provides logistical support to search and rescue operations and is responsible for the training, development and coordination of the volunteer GSAR team network. As previously discussed in this Section, the authority to ensure an effective Incident Command System is implemented at all provincial emergency incidents remains with the Agency.

The Manitoba Provincial GSAR network has been developed over the past 14 years through the provincial mutual aid network as well as the First Nations Tribal Council areas across the province. Presently there are 28 active volunteer GSAR teams trained and equipped to respond across the province.

- This year the Agency has developed the following action plans:
- Continue to maintain the Provincial GSAR volunteer team network through the delivery of certified training programs at

the district level, hosting of an annual Provincial GSAR training exercise, and offering a winter rescue and survival training program for GSAR personnel

- Continue to support the RCMP and other police agencies having jurisdiction by providing logistical support and coordination of volunteer SAR teams, as well as ensure an effective Incident Command System is implemented at all GSAR incidents across Manitoba
- Continue to work with the WPS to develop an effective GSAR network within the City of Winnipeg.

In addition, under a Federal New Initiatives Fund (NIF) for Search and Rescue, the Agency hosted an annual multi-agency GSAR exercise in the second quarter and provided winter rescue and survival training programs to GSAR personnel in the fourth quarter.

The Agency has responded to five GSAR incidents at the request of the RCMP or WPS during the 2009/10 year.

### ***3.6.7 To continue to support Manitoba Conservation and municipalities when communities and property are threatened by wildland urban interface fires.***

The responsibility for wildfire suppression rests with municipalities in organized areas of the province and with Manitoba Conservation in the unorganized territory. The Agency remains committed to providing life and property protection support across the Province of Manitoba in support of provincial or municipal agency suppression efforts.

The OFC responded to one call for assistance regarding urban interface fires in the 2009/10 year.

To continue to support police services in responding to illegal drug operations such as methamphetamine laboratories and marijuana grow operations.

All sources of information indicate that there appears to be an increase in illegal drug lab and grow activity in the province. In response to this concern the Agency has developed a MOU with the RCMP to assist them in the safe mitigation of these operations by providing the necessary fire and rescue protection, specialized hazmat services and Building and Fire Code inspections of sites.

The Agency has responded to 23 illegal drug operations in the 2009/10 year.



OFC's K9 Flash providing security assistance at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.

# 4

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2009 Structural Collapse training MESC

### *Emergency Services/Municipal Support*

The fire service in North America has traditionally been reactive. It responds to emergency situations as they arise with less emphasis on prevention.

The Agency wants to help ensure that the Manitoba Fire Service places an emphasis on prevention and education in an effort to minimize the number of life and property threatening incidents that occur. To this end, the Agency has developed a Five Step Action Plan for the municipal fire service. The Agency will continue to work with the Manitoba fire departments to help implement the program.

INDICATORS	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
Attendance of Emergency Services Officers or OFC representative at Mutual Aid and Training District meetings.	95%	92%	92%
OFC Management to attend one Mutual Aid District Meeting per district per year.	100%	97%	100%
Requests for assistance from municipal council or fire department responded to within three working days	92%	91%	87%
Requests for fire inspection from all client groups responded to within five working days	95%	91%	92%
Delivery of Elected Officials Seminars at the Mutual Aid level	8	8	7

## ***Education and Training***

The MESC provides training in program areas including Fire Fighting Practices, Fire Service Instructor, Public Safety, Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Driver/Operator, Institutional Fire Protection, Fire Officer, Fire Investigation, Building Standards and Fire Prevention

The large number of graduates from these MESC courses helps ensure that the province maintains a network of trained emergency response personnel. In addition to providing free training to our traditional Manitoba client, the MESC has been seeking revenue sources through new clients.

MESC PROGRAMS	2009/10	2008/09
Number of people taking courses from MESC	4534	6425
Gainful employment for PFP Program students in an emergency service career within one year of graduation	82%	85%
Overall satisfaction rating of MESC programs by Public Fire Paramedic Program students	90%	90%
Satisfaction rating of individual courses offered by college (scale of 10) to all client groups	9.0	9.25

## ***CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)***

The OFC initiated, developed and now maintains a provincial network of trained Critical Incident Stress Management personnel. Their primary role is to provide support to the first responders who are engaged in critical incidents to mitigate the negative psychological affects that such incidents can have on the personal and career lives of these responders.

	2009/10	2008/09
Maintain seven Provincial Teams	1	1
Response to CISM requests at the regional levels responded to within four hours	100%	95%
Response to CISM requests at the provincial levels responded to within one hour	100%	98%
Number of Advanced and Basic courses offered	five Basic Completed three Advanced Delivered	six Basic Completed three Advanced Delivered

## **Codes and Standards**

		2009/10	2008/09
1	Time to process building permits (% within nine working days)	91%	92%
2	Delivery of awareness seminars for RV/Mobile Home dealers re: safety requirements	3	3
3	Develop delivery of educational programs with other government agencies	4	3
4	Delivery of contractor information sessions	4	3

The Codes and Standards section plays an important role in public safety. By reviewing building plans, inspecting buildings and providing consultative services to the public, the staff work to ensure that buildings meet the Provincial Building, Fire and Plumbing

Codes and do not present a serious threat to public safety. The goal of this section is to reduce injuries, deaths and property losses arising from substandard construction. We cannot readily quantify these public benefits

## **FIRE INVESTIGATIONS**

Fire Investigations are conducted by members of the Manitoba Fire Service or the OFC in co-operation with police authorities and the insurance industry. Clients call upon the services of our fire investigators for situations such as fire fatalities, serious

injuries, explosions, fires where origin or cause cannot be determined and any fire resulting in a major loss to the community.

The goal of the OFC is to see the number of investigations decline. This would reduce operating costs through the reduction of overtime paid to investigators. The key to achieving this goal is to continue training members of the Manitoba Fire Service in fire investigations. This would allow OFC investigators to deal with the more critical investigations.



GSAR Exercise 2009

The investigation work done by the Agency assists in the laying of criminal charges and conviction of criminals. No specific targets are set in these areas as the number of charges and convictions fluctuate with the number of arson incidents. Decisions made and actions taken by the police and prosecutors influence both the number of charges and convictions.

Where arson is the cause of a fire, there can be savings to the insurance industry through reduced payouts. Investigative work also identifies how a structure performed during a fire which provides valuable evidence as to the adequacy of existing building codes. The knowledge gained is used to provide input into the code setting process.

INDICATORS		2009	2008	2007
1	Fire Investigations	686	693	636
2	Percentage for which cause was determined	87%	83%	84%
3	Decrease in Arson Suspicious Fires Province Winnipeg	(66%) 4%	15% 6%	21 (13%)
4	Deliver two Youth Fire Stop Programs to investigation and support Agencies	3	3	3

## ***Emergency Response***

INDICATORS		2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
1	When requested to respond to emergency situations the response shall be within 45 minutes of call	100%	100%	100%
	When requested to respond to emergency situations the response shall be within 45 minutes of call	22	43	30



Sparky at Special Olympics Fundraising event.

# 5

## FINANCIAL DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### REVENUES (000's)

**Levy** - The amount recorded as levy revenue is an accrual based on the budget.

**Codes & Standards** - Codes & Standards revenue (excluding BFO and NRCAN) is \$428 over last year and \$732 over budget. Revenue from this source fluctuates significantly with economic cycles, particularly building construction.

**Fire Inspections, Investigations & Reports** - Inspection revenue is \$91 over last year and \$106 over budget. The increase is due to the increasing number of grow operations discovered in the Province.

**Tuition and Contract Revenue** - Tuition and contract revenue is \$316 over last year and \$46 over budget. Some capacity was lost last year during construction at the MESC. Our primary customer for training, the Manitoba Fire Service, continues to receive training at no charge.

**New Search and Rescue (SAR) Initiative Fund (NIF) Grant** - The purpose of this grant is to enhance Manitoba search and rescue capabilities by developing the volunteer search and rescue system aimed at Northern and remote areas of Manitoba. Grants of \$73 were applied for this year.

**JEPP (Joint Emergency Preparedness Program) Capital Grant** - The amount of \$117 represents revenue taken in from the deferred revenue account for capital asset purchases, as discussed in the Notes to the Financial Statements.

**JEPP (Joint Emergency Preparedness Program) Initiative Operating Grant** - The purpose of this grant is to provide for the continued maintenance, training and education and scheduled team meetings and exercises to support the HUSAR and HAZMAT capability within the Province of Manitoba. \$516 in grants were applied for this year.

**Interest** - Interest revenue is earned on the cash surplus accumulated in March 2009 when funds for the Fires Prevention Fund were received for the current fiscal year. The surplus is drawn down throughout the year to finance OFC operations and capital spending. Interest rates have fallen significantly from the same period last year. The interest rate paid by Treasury Banking for most of the year has been 0.15 per cent.

**Summary** - Agency revenues are over budget by \$1,661 and over last year by \$1,495. The main reason for the favourable variance is the increase in permit, levy, JEPP operating grants, and investigation revenue.



## **EXPENDITURES (000's)**

**Amortization** – Amortization costs are \$40 over budget due to the timing of capital acquisitions in the budget.

**Desktop Management** – Desktop Management costs are \$35 over last year and \$76 over budget as STEM increases its charges.

**Property Taxes** – Property taxes are \$28 over budget and \$24 over last year as a result of increased taxes by the City of Brandon.

**Mutual Aid** – The mutual aid line item represents incentive grants given to mutual aid districts to encourage the delivery of training programs in their districts with their own personnel. Certain criteria must be met before a grant will be issued. This account is \$2 under budget and \$31 over last year. The variances are the result of timing differences of when the aid grants are paid out.

**Salaries & Benefits** – Salaries and benefits are \$595 over last year as a result of a larger staff and overtime payments for flood activity, and \$145 under budget as a result of timing of budgeted staff changes.

**Supplies** – Supply costs are \$347 under last year and \$483 over budget due to higher than expected supply costs in all sections of the Agency and costs incurred working the floods.

**Travel** – Travel costs are \$62 over last year and \$27 over budget.

**Vehicle Lease** – Vehicle Lease costs are \$5 over last year and \$144 over budget because of higher usage and higher lease costs on vehicle turnover.

**Repairs and Maintenance** – R&M costs are \$99 over last year and \$172 over budget. The age of some of the owned service vehicles is starting to show. Fleet charges continue to climb.

**Summary** – Overall, expenditures have increased \$1,086 over last year and are \$1,212 over budget. The Agency earned a surplus of \$570 versus a surplus of \$409 last year.



2009 CBRNE Exercise



## Management's Report

For the year ended March 31, 2010

The accompanying financial statements of the Office of the Fire Commissioner are the responsibility of management and have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. In management's opinion, the financial statements have been properly prepared within the reasonable limits of materiality, incorporating management's best judgement regarding all necessary estimates and all other data available up to May 18, 2010.

Management maintains internal controls to provide reasonable assurance of the reliability and accuracy of the financial information and that the assets of the Office of the Fire Commissioner are properly safeguarded.

The responsibility of the auditor is to express an opinion of whether the financial statements of the Office of the Fire Commissioner are fairly presented in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. The auditor's report outlines the scope of the audit examination and provides the audit opinion.

On behalf of management,

Original signed by

Christopher L. Jones  
Fire Commissioner

Original signed by

Justin Panagapko  
Deputy Fire Commissioner – Support Services

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**

**Financial Statements**  
For the year ended March 31, 2010

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700 - 200 Graham Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R3C 4L5 Canada

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## Auditors' Report

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### To the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority:

We have audited the balance sheet of the Office of the Fire Commissioner, an Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority, Province of Manitoba as at March 31, 2010 and the statements of operations and retained earnings, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Agency's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Agency as at March 31, 2010 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Original signed by

Chartered Accountants

Winnipeg, Manitoba

May 18, 2010, except as to Note 17 which is as of May 19, 2010

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**(In Thousands)**

March 31	2010	2009
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash	\$ 5,682	\$ 3,888
Short-term investments	-	3,500
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	3,119	1,803
Prepaid expense	66	60
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8,867	9,251
<b>Non-current Assets</b>		
Long-term investment (Note 5)	559	559
Capital assets (Note 6)	7,890	6,566
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8,449	7,125
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 17,316</b>	<b>\$ 16,376</b>
<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 10	\$ 279
Accrued liabilities	1,942	1,465
Deferred revenue	386	352
Current portion of obligation under capital lease (Note 16)	42	28
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,380	2,124
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
Obligation under capital lease (Note 16)	154	171
Severance liability (Note 7)	503	427
Deferred contributions (Note 10)	724	648
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,381	1,246
<b>Equity</b>		
Contributed capital (Note 8)	11,279	11,279
Water Bomber Reserve Fund (Note 11)	200	200
Canine Training Reserve Fund (Note 12)	40	40
Special Rescue Reserve Fund (Note 13)	200	-
Retained earnings	1,836	1,487
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,555	13,006
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 17,316</b>	<b>\$ 16,376</b>

Approved on behalf of the Special Operating Agency Advisory Board:

Original signed by

Chairperson

Original signed by

Fire Commissioner

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Statement of Retained Earnings**  
**(In Thousands)**

<b>For the year ended March 31</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Opening balance</b>	\$ 1,487	\$ 1,335
<b>Net income and comprehensive income for the year</b>	570	160
<b>Canine Training Reserve Fund Allocation (Note 12)</b>	-	(8)
<b>Special Rescue Reserve Fund Allocation (Note 13)</b>	<u>(221)</u>	-
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>\$ 1,836</b>	<b>\$ 1,487</b>

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Statement of Operations**  
**(In Thousands)**

For the year ended March 31	2010 Actual	2009 Actual	Actual Variance	Budget (Unaudited)	Budget Variance
<b>Revenue</b>					
Levy	\$ 5,969	\$ 5,719	\$ 250	\$ 5,326	\$ 643
Codes and standards	1,832	1,404	428	1,100	732
Tuition and contract revenue	1,546	1,230	316	1,500	46
Grant - NRCAN Green Building Promotion	650	-	650	650	-
JEPP Initiative grant (Note 10)	516	668	(152)	300	216
Grant - Budgeting for Outcomes	400	400	-	400	-
JEPP capital grant (Note 10)	117	142	(25)	200	(83)
Other revenue	95	136	(41)	70	25
Emergency services conference	147	133	14	110	37
Grant - Mutual Aid	130	130	-	130	-
Interest	7	84	(77)	80	(73)
Fire inspections, investigations and reports	131	39	92	25	106
New SAR Initiative (NIF) - Grant (Note 9)	73	34	39	50	23
Rent	4	4	-	-	4
Grant - Health	-	-	-	15	(15)
	<b>11,617</b>	<b>10,123</b>	<b>1,494</b>	<b>9,956</b>	<b>1,661</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Salaries and benefits	5,665	5,070	595	5,810	(145)
Amortization	991	853	138	951	40
Supplies	768	421	347	285	483
Travel	527	465	62	500	27
Vehicle lease	464	459	5	320	144
Repairs and maintenance	417	318	99	245	172
Mutual Aid	253	222	31	255	(2)
Desktop management	241	207	34	165	76
Rent	237	208	29	185	52
Minor capital	211	101	110	-	211
Communications	206	170	36	165	41
Property taxes	163	139	24	135	28
Insurance	135	127	8	112	23
Professional services	135	70	65	96	39
Information systems	114	(22)	136	-	114
Clothing	106	42	64	25	81
Labour services	95	95	-	96	(1)
Utilities	76	87	(11)	78	(2)
Fuel - Owned vehicles	43	71	(28)	100	(57)
Other	40	23	17	25	15
Publications	30	21	9	27	3
Postal and courier	28	34	(6)	40	(12)
Professional development	28	32	(4)	31	(3)
Public education material	26	30	(4)	30	(4)
Marketing	21	27	(6)	20	1
Buildings standards board	13	6	7	15	(2)
Memberships and subscriptions	7	11	(4)	3	4
Seminar and conference registration	5	4	1	8	(3)
S.O.A. Board	1	3	(2)	4	(3)
Photofinishing	1	1	-	2	(1)
JEPP and HUSAR initiative	-	668	(668)	30	(30)
Emergency response	-	-	-	60	(60)
Loss on asset disposition	-	-	-	18	(18)
	<b>11,047</b>	<b>9,963</b>	<b>1,084</b>	<b>9,836</b>	<b>1,211</b>
<b>Net income and comprehensive income for the year</b>					
	<b>\$ 570</b>	<b>\$ 160</b>	<b>\$ 410</b>	<b>\$ 120</b>	<b>\$ 450</b>

The accompanying summary of significant accounting policies and notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**(In Thousands)**

For the year ended March 31	2010	2009
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		
Net income for the year	\$ 570	\$ 160
Items not involving cash		
Amortization of capital assets	991	853
Amortization of deferred contributions	<u>(117)</u>	<u>(142)</u>
	1,444	871
Net change in non-cash working capital balances	<u>(1,007)</u>	206
	437	1,077
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		
Proceeds on disposal of capital assets	10	-
Purchase of capital assets	<u>(2,335)</u>	<u>(1,290)</u>
	(2,325)	(1,290)
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>		
Transfer from Special Rescue Reserve	(21)	-
Deferred contributions received	<u>203</u>	164
	182	164
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(1,706)	(49)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	7,388	7,437
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 5,682</b>	<b>\$ 7,388</b>
Represented by:		
Cash and bank	\$ 5,682	\$ 3,888
Short-term investments	-	3,500
	\$ 5,682	\$ 7,388

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**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

**For the year ended March 31, 2010**

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**Basis of Accounting** The financial statements are presented in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

**Capital Assets** Buildings, fire engines, other vehicles and air compressors transferred to the SOAFA from the Government of Manitoba on April 1, 1996 were valued at the lower of their amortized cost or estimated market value. All other assets transferred from the Government of Manitoba on April 1, 1996 were valued at their market value.

The Agency provides for amortization of its capital assets on the following basis:

Buildings	5% declining balance
Practical training site	10% declining balance
Equipment	20% declining balance
Fire engines	30% declining balance
Other vehicles	30% declining balance
Air compressors	20% declining balance
Furniture	20% declining balance
Computer equipment and software	30% declining balance

**Revenue Recognition** The Fires Prevention Act imposes a special assessment on licensed insurers equal to a set percentage of total property insurance premiums.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner collects this levy based on the value of premiums and assessments in respect to property insurance in a calendar year. Levy revenue with respect to the 2009 calendar year will be recognized as revenue in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010. The levy rate is set at 1.25%.

Codes and standards, conference, and tuition and contract revenue is recognized when earned. Operating grant revenue is recognized as revenue when receivable. Grant revenue received for the purchase of capital assets is deferred and recognized as revenue in the same fiscal year and at the same rate as the amortization expense of the related capital assets.

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**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

**For the year ended March 31, 2010**

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**Capital Disclosures**

The Agency's capital consists of contributed capital, Water Bomber Reserve Fund, Canine Training Reserve Fund, Special Rescue Reserve Fund and retained earnings provided from operations.

The Agency's capital management policy is to maintain sufficient capital to meet its objectives through its retained earnings by managing transfers of surplus funds to the Province of Manitoba; meet short-term capital needs with working capital advances from the Province of Manitoba; and meet long-term capital needs through long-term debt with the Province of Manitoba. There were no changes in the Agency's approach to capital management during the period.

The Agency is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

**Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amount of revenues and expenses during the reported period. These estimates are reviewed periodically, and, as adjustments become necessary, they are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known.

**Future Accounting Policy Changes**

A recent accounting pronouncement that has been issued but is not yet effective, and has a potential implication for the Agency, is as follows:

*Convergence with Public Sector Accounting Standards as issued by the Public Sector Accounting Board*

Effective April 1, 2011 the Agency will be adopting Public Sector Accounting Standards issued by the Public Sector Accounting Board. The Agency is currently in the process of quantifying the impact these changes will have on its financial position.

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**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
**An Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority**  
**Province of Manitoba**  
**Notes to Financial Statements**  
**(in Thousands)**

**For the year ended March 31, 2010**

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**1. Nature of the Office of the Fire Commissioner**

Effective April 1, 1996, the Office of the Fire Commissioner was designated as a Special Operating Agency (SOA) under The Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority Act, Cap. S185, C.C.S.M. and operates under a charter approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Effective April 1, 1996, a Transfer Agreement executed between the Government of Manitoba (Labour) and the Financing Authority, a corporation under The Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority (SOFAFA) Act, transferred all assets in the Fires Prevention Fund valued at \$11,809 to the Financing Authority.

A Management Agreement executed between the Financing Authority and the Government of Manitoba (Labour) assigned responsibility to the Office of the Fire Commissioner to manage and account for the related assets and operations on behalf of the Financing Authority. The Office itself does not hold title to any assets. Effective April 1, 1996, the Financing Authority established a fund account referred to as the Fires Prevention Fund to hold these assets.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner will continue to be part of the Department of Labour and Immigration and ultimately under the policy direction of the Minister of Labour and Immigration.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner will remain bound by relevant legislation and regulations. It will also remain bound by administrative policy except where specific exemptions have been provided for in its charter in order to meet business objectives.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner is economically dependent on the Province of Manitoba, as it derives most of its revenues from the Fires Prevention Levy.

**2. Change in Accounting Policies**

***Section 3064 Goodwill and Intangible Assets***

Effective April 1, 2009, the Agency adopted the recommendations of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) Handbook section 3064 Goodwill and Intangible Assets and the updates to the CICA Handbook section 1000 Financial Statement Concepts.

This guidance establishes updated standards for the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of goodwill and intangible assets.

These changes did not have an impact on the Agency's financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2010.

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**2. Change in Accounting Policies (continued)**

*Credit Risk and Fair Value of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities*

During 2009, the Agency adopted the Emerging Issues Committee (EIC) 173 and amendments to Section 3855, Financial Instruments - Recognition and Measurement and 3862, Financial Instruments - Disclosures:

- Section 3855 - Effective Interest Method
- Section 3855 - Embedded Derivatives on Reclassification of Financial Assets
- Section 3855 - Impairment of Financial Assets
- Section 3862 - Fair Value and Liquidity Risk Disclosure

Due to the nature of the Agency's financial instruments, the adoption of these standards and amendments had no material impact on the financial position of the Agency.

**3. Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management**

Financial assets and liabilities are initially recorded at fair value. Measurement in subsequent periods depends on the financial instrument's classification. Financial instruments are classified into one of the following five categories: held for trading; available for sale; held to maturity; loans and receivables; and other financial liabilities. All financial instruments classified as held for trading or available for sale are subsequently measured at fair value with any change in fair value recorded in net earnings and other comprehensive income, respectively. All other financial instruments are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

The financial assets and liabilities of the Agency are classified and measured as follows:

<u>Financial Asset/Liability</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Subsequent Measurement</u>
Cash and short-term investments	Held for trading	Fair value
Accounts receivable	Loans and receivables	Amortized cost
Accrued interest	Loans and receivables	Amortized cost
Due from Province of Manitoba	Loans and receivables	Amortized cost
Long term investment	Held for trading	Fair value
Accounts payable	Other financial liabilities	Amortized cost
Accrued liabilities	Other financial liabilities	Amortized cost

Amortized cost is determined using the effective interest rate method.

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**3. Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management (continued)**

Gains and losses on financial instruments subsequently measured at amortized cost are recognized in the statement of operations and retained earnings in the period the gain or loss occurs. Changes in fair value on financial instruments classified as held for trading are recognized in the statement of operations and retained earnings for the current period. Changes in fair value on financial instruments classified as available for sale would be recorded in other comprehensive income until realized, at which time they recorded in the statement of operations and retained earnings.

**Fair Value of Financial Instruments**

The fair values of accounts receivable, long-term investments, accounts payable and accrued liabilities approximate their carrying values due to their short-term maturity. The fair value of the Agency's financial instruments has been determined based on quoted prices from active markets.

**Financial Risk Management - Overview**

The Agency has exposure to the following risks from its use of financial instruments: credit risk; liquidity risk; market risk; interest risk; and foreign currency risk.

**Credit Risk**

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument fails to discharge an obligation and causes financial loss to another party. Financial instruments which potentially subject the Agency to credit risk consist principally of cash and term deposits and accounts receivable.

The maximum exposure of the Agency to credit risk at March 31, 2010 is:

Cash and short-term investments	\$ 5,682
Accounts receivable	3,119
Long term investment	<u>559</u>
	<u>\$ 9,360</u>

Cash, short-term investments and long term investment: The Agency is not exposed to significant credit risk as the cash and term deposits are primarily held by the Minister of Finance.

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**OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER**  
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**3. Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management (continued)**

**Accounts receivable:** The Agency is not exposed to significant credit risk as the majority of the receivables are due from other reliable organizations and payment in full is typically collected when it is due. The Agency establishes an allowance for doubtful accounts that represents its estimate of potential credit losses. The allowance for doubtful accounts is based on management's estimates and assumptions regarding current market conditions, customer analysis and historical payment trends. These factors are considered when determining whether past due accounts are allowed for or written off.

Management has determined that no allowance for doubtful accounts is required as at March 31, 2010.

**Liquidity Risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Agency will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they come due.

The Agency manages liquidity risk by maintaining adequate cash balances and by review from the Province of Manitoba to ensure adequate funding will be received to meet the obligations.

**Market Risk**

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices, such as interest rates and foreign exchange rates, will affect the Agency's income or the fair values of its financial instruments. The significant market risks the Agency is exposed to are interest rate risk and foreign currency risk.

**Interest Rate Risk**

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The interest rate exposure relates to short-term and long-term investments.

The interest rate risk on short-term and long-term investments is considered to be low because of their short-term nature.

**Foreign Currency Risk**

Foreign currency risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates. The Agency is not exposed to significant foreign currency risk as it does not have any financial instruments denominated in foreign currency.

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**4. Accounts Receivable**

The accounts receivable balance is made up of the following:

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
Insurance Branch of Department of Consumer & Corporate Affairs	\$ 29	\$ 182
Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness	1,705	1,090
National Resources Canada	826	176
Manitoba Mutual Aid Grant	260	130
Manitoba STEM	-	3
Manitoba Health	110	110
Other	189	112
	<hr/> <b>\$ 3,119</b>	<hr/> <b>\$ 1,803</b>

**5. Long-term Investment**

The Province of Manitoba accepted responsibility for the vacation entitlements earned by the employees of the Agency prior to its designation as SOA, and the severance pay benefits accumulated to March 31, 1998 for certain of the Agency's employees. Accordingly, the Agency recorded a receivable of \$559 (\$311 for severance pay benefits and \$248 for vacation entitlements) from the Province of Manitoba for these accumulated benefits. Effective March 31, 2009 the Province of Manitoba paid the receivable balances related to the funding for these liabilities and has placed the amount of \$559 into an interest bearing trust account to be held on the Agency's behalf until the cash is required to discharge the related liabilities.

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**6. Capital Assets**

	Opening Balance		Additions		Disposals		Closing Balance
Buildings	\$ 5,349	\$	1,326	\$	-	\$	6,675
Buildings - JEPP	95		193		-		288
Training site	2,134		-		-		2,134
Training site - JEPP	212		-		-		212
Equipment	1,943		111		-		2,054
Equipment - JEPP	908		10		-		918
Fire engines	989		411		-		1,400
Other vehicles	506		101		38		569
Other vehicles - capital lease	280		56		-		336
Other vehicles - JEPP	193		-		10		183
Air compressors	561		117		-		678
Furniture	70		10		-		80
Computers	383		-		-		383
Computers - JEPP	12		-		-		12
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>\$ 13,635</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,335</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>15,922</b>

	Opening Accumulated Amortization		Current Year's Disposition	Amortization		Accumulated Amortization	
Buildings	\$ 1,699	\$	-	\$	249	\$	1,948
Buildings - JEPP	10		-		14		24
Training site	1,125		-		101		1,226
Training site - JEPP	62		-		15		77
Equipment	1,419		-		127		1,546
Equipment - JEPP	592		-		65		657
Fire engines	888		-		154		1,042
Other vehicles	367		28		75		414
Other vehicles - capital lease	84		-		76		160
Other vehicles - JEPP	95		-		23		118
Air compressors	344		-		67		411
Furniture	66		-		2		68
Computers	307		-		23		330
Computers - JEPP	11		-		-		11
<b>Total amortization</b>	<b>\$ 7,069</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>8,032</b>
<b>Net capital assets</b>	<b>\$ 6,566</b>				<b>\$ 7,890</b>		

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**7. Severance Liability**

Effective April 1, 1998, the Office of the Fire Commissioner began recording accumulated severance pay benefits for its employees. The amount of severance pay obligations is based on actuarial calculations. The periodic actuarial valuations of these liabilities may determine that adjustments are needed to the actuarial calculations when actual experience is different from that expected and/or because of changes in actuarial assumptions used. The resulting actuarial gains or losses are amortized over the expected average remaining service life of the related employee group.

An actuarial report was completed for the severance pay liability as of March 31, 2008. The report provides a formula to update the liability on an annual basis. The Agency's actuarially determined net liability for accounting purposes as at March 31, 2010 was \$503 (2009 - \$427), with the actuarial gain or loss being amortized over the 15 year expected average remaining service life of the employee group.

Significant long-term actuarial assumptions used in the March 31, 2008 valuation, and in the determination of the March 31, 2010 present value of the accrued severance benefit obligation were:

Annual rate of return	
inflation component	2.50%
real rate of return	<u>4.00%</u>
	6.50%
Annual salary increase rates	
annual productivity increase	0.75%
annual general salary increase	<u>3.50%</u>
	4.25%

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**8. Contributed Capital**

In consideration of the transfer of said assets effective April 1, 1996, the SOAFA shall:

- a) not incur or repay to the Government of Manitoba any debt relative to the assets as described in the balance sheet prepared as of March 31, 1996 and verified by the Department of Finance; and
- b) record the balance of \$11,038 (being the balance of the net assets as described in the balance sheet prepared as of March 31, 1996 and verified by the Department of Finance) as Manitoba's equity in the Financing Authority as related to the Agency's operations.

Due to a change in accounting policy, buildings were being amortized over 40 years as opposed to 30 years. This has resulted in a revaluation of buildings as at April 1, 1996. The value of buildings and contributed equity has increased \$241 as at April 1, 1996 to \$11,279.

**9. New Search and Rescue (SAR) Initiative (NIF)**

On a quarterly basis, the Office of the Fire Commissioner applies for a grant from the National Search and Rescue Secretariat of the Department of National Defence. The purpose of this grant is to enhance Manitoba search and rescue capabilities by developing the volunteer search and rescue system aimed at northern and remote areas of Manitoba.

The New SAR Initiative (NIF) Grant line item reflects the grant received for the year ended March 31, 2010 of \$73 (\$34 in 2009).

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**10. Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) Grant**

The Office of the Fire Commissioner applies for grants from the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness. The two purposes of these grants are to enhance the Province of Manitoba's ability to respond to hazardous material and heavy urban search and rescue emergency responses through the provision of equipment and training.

JEPP operating grant revenue for the year ended March 31, 2010 is \$516 (\$668 in 2009). An amount of \$117 was taken into revenue from the deferred revenue account for the amortization of the JEPP assets for the year ended March 31, 2010 (\$142 in 2009).

No JEPP capital assets have been purchased in the year ended March 31, 2010 (\$165 in 2009); however, \$193 of buildings cost previously recorded in the regular building account were transferred to the JEPP account. JEPP deferred revenue is equal to the net book value of assets purchased with JEPP capital grants. JEPP deferred revenue as at March 31, 2010 is \$724 (\$648 in 2009).

**11. Water Bomber Reserve Fund**

The Agency received approval from Treasury Board in the year ended March 31, 2005 to establish a special reserve fund for water bomber fire suppression activities. This fund is capped at an amount of \$200 and will be utilized to cover the costs associated with water bomber deployment for non-forest fire incidents occurring on Rural Municipality property. As at March 31, 2010, the Agency has allocated a total of \$200 to this fund from its retained earnings account.

**12. Canine Training Reserve Fund**

The Agency established a special reserve fund for replacing and training a rescue dog. The total cost to train a dog is estimated at \$40 and the average time a dog spends in service is six years. The fund was capped at \$40 at the end of the March 31, 2009 fiscal year. Once this fund has been used it will be discontinued.

**13. Special Rescue Reserve Fund**

The Agency received approval from Treasury Board during the year to establish a special reserve fund for special rescue activities. This fund is capped at \$200. As at March 31, 2010, the Agency has allocated \$200 to this fund from retained earnings. During the year, an amount of \$21 was drawn from the fund, and it was replenished to \$200.

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**For the year ended March 31, 2010**

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**14. Commitments and Contingencies**

The Office of the Fire Commissioner as tenant has entered into a Lease Agreement with the City of Brandon as Landlord for the land upon which the practical training facility has been constructed. The term of the lease expires May 31, 2012. Minimum annual rent is \$11 due in equal monthly instalments, plus all operating costs with respect to the subject land.

Office equipment leases exist for four copy machines.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner has entered into leases on a fleet of 38 vehicles.

These three categories of leases give rise to commitments as follows:

2011	\$	243
2012	\$	204
2013	\$	181
2014	\$	82
2015	\$	46

**15. Pension Benefits**

Employees of the Office of the Fire Commissioner are eligible for pension benefits in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Superannuation Act, administered by the Civil Service Superannuation Board (CSSB). The CSSA established a defined benefit plan to provide benefits to employees of the Manitoba Civil Service and to participating agencies of the Government, including the Office of the Fire Commissioner, through the Civil Service Superannuation Fund (CSSF).

Effective March 31, 2001, pursuant to an agreement with the Province of Manitoba the Office of the Fire Commissioner transferred to the Province the pension liability for its employees. Commencing April 1, 2001, the Office of the Fire Commissioner was required to pay to the Province an amount equal to its employees' current pension contributions. The amount paid for March 31, 2010 was \$269 (\$206 in 2009). Under this agreement, the Office of the Fire Commissioner has no further pension liability.

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**16. Obligation under Capital Lease**

	2010	2009
Polaris Leasing Ltd., capital lease due November 1, 2013, interest at 7.318% per year with annual principal and interest payments of \$43 for the first 4 years and a final payment of \$79 in 2014.	\$ 171	\$ 199
CTS Lease and Rental, capital lease due March 15, 2012, interest at 7.486% per year with annual principal and interest payments of \$14 for three years.	25	-
	196	199
Current portion of obligation under capital lease	<u>42</u>	<u>28</u>
	<u>\$ 154</u>	<u>\$ 171</u>

Obligations under capital lease are secured by the equipment under lease.

The future minimum lease payments for the next four years are as follows:

2011	\$ 42
2012	45
2013	35
2014	<u>74</u>
	<u>\$ 196</u>

**17. Contingencies**

The Office of the Fire Commissioner has been named in a lawsuit. The likelihood of damages being awarded and the amount to be awarded is not reasonably estimable for the claim. Should any loss result from the resolution of this claim, such loss will be charged to operations in the year of resolution.



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## Auditors' Report Schedule of Compensation

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### To the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority:

We have audited the Schedule of Public Sector Compensation Disclosure (as defined under The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act) of the **Office of the Fire Commissioner**, an Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority, Province of Manitoba for the year ended March 31, 2010. This financial information is the responsibility of the Agency's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on this financial information based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial information is free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial information.

In our opinion, this schedule presents fairly, in all material respects, the compensation of the **Office of the Fire Commissioner**, an Agency of the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority, Province of Manitoba greater than or equal to \$50,000 and the aggregate amount paid to its board members for the year ended March 31, 2010 in accordance with, and as required by, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act.

Original signed by

Chartered Accountants

Winnipeg, Manitoba  
May 18, 2010

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Pursuant to the disclosure required by The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act, no remuneration was paid to Advisory Board members. During the fiscal year ended March 31, 2010, the following employees received compensation of wages and taxable benefits of \$50 or more:

Name	Position	2010	2009
D. Popowich	Fire Commissioner	103	100
C. Jones	Fire Commissioner	101	82
R. Vandekerhove	Manager, Investigations	96	86
D. Singleton	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	95	89
C. Hogarth	Investigator	95	90
W. Harrow	Investigator	92	94
K. Giersh	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	88	79
K. Ross	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	85	78
G. Favelle	Manager, Critical Incident Stress Management	83	82
D. Schafer	Manager, Municipal Services	82	79
T. Praznik	Manager – Rescue and Specialty Program	82	74
M. Bedford	Emergency Service Officer	80	78
R. Bridges	Emergency Service Officer/Instructor	79	71
M. Purtill	Emergency Service Officer/Instructor	78	51
K. Popowich	Emergency Service Officer/Instructor	78	63
R. Gillis	Emergency Service Officer/Instructor	78	73
T. Harper	Manager, Codes and Standards	76	64
R. Denslow	Emergency Service Officer/Instructor	76	73
K. Oman	Codes and Standards Officer	76	67
R. Pike	Deputy Fire Commissioner	75	75
M. Kerbis	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	75	68
D. Beacham	Codes and Standards Officer	75	78
J. Burch	Controller	72	70
B. Popko	Manager, Manitoba Emergency Service College	70	61
G. Giesbrecht	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	70	65
J. Panagapko	Deputy Fire Commissioner	69	63
G. Winder	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	69	61
K. Kroeker	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	68	67
S. Dufresne	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	68	63
R. Harvey	Coordinator, Rescue Programs	67	69
S. Fisher	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	67	-
D. Friesen	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	67	58
A. Campbell	Codes and Standards Officer	66	65
T. Grimshaw	Codes and Standards Officer	66	64
T. Jennings	Codes and Standards Officer	66	64
S. Wolf	Codes and Standards Officer	66	64
J. Wedge	Codes and Standards Officer	66	64
D. Franchewski	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	66	62
K. Carmicheal	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	65	65
L. Oliver	Coordinator, Emergency Medical Programs	65	64
E. Cummings	Curriculum Development Officer	65	60

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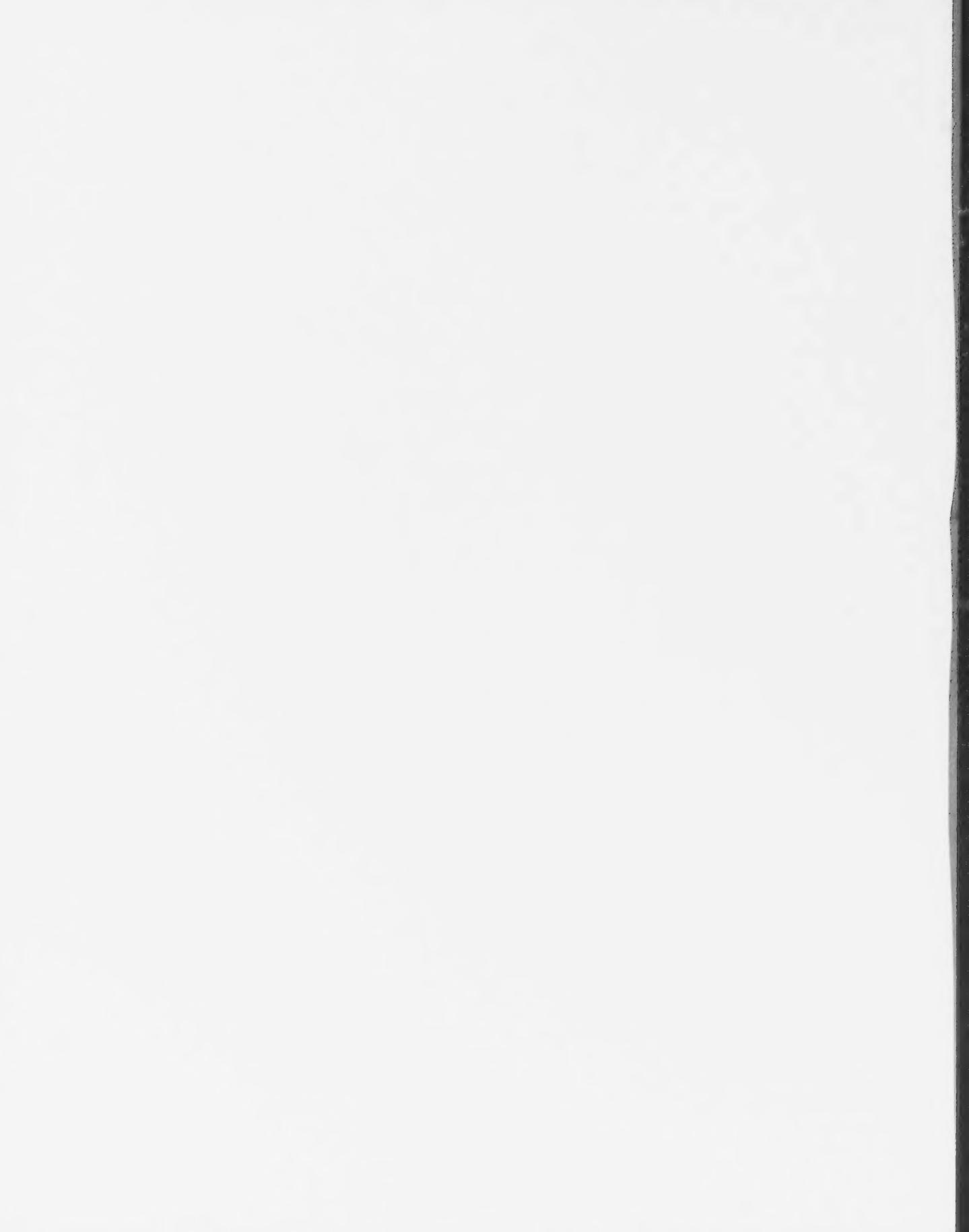
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A. Gray	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	64	64
R. Hoglander	Codes and Standards Officer	64	60
M. Emrick	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	63	54
C. Knight	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	63	55
L. Chemerika	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	61	56
C. Samson	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	60	-
K. Danino	Public Education Officer	59	56
C. Szeqaga	Codes and Standards Officer	58	-
L. Wenger	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	56	51
J. Erwin	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	56	-
E. MacDonald	Accounting Assistant	53	-
B. Brodziak	Emergency Services Officer/Instructor	53	-
C. Bouchie	On Line Student Services	52	-
D. Ashley	Accounting Assistant	51	50
D. Romo	Codes and Standards Officer	-	60

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Any disclosures of wrongdoing received by Office of The Fire Commissioner pursuant to *The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection Act)* will be reported in the annual report of Office of The Fire Commissioner.



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